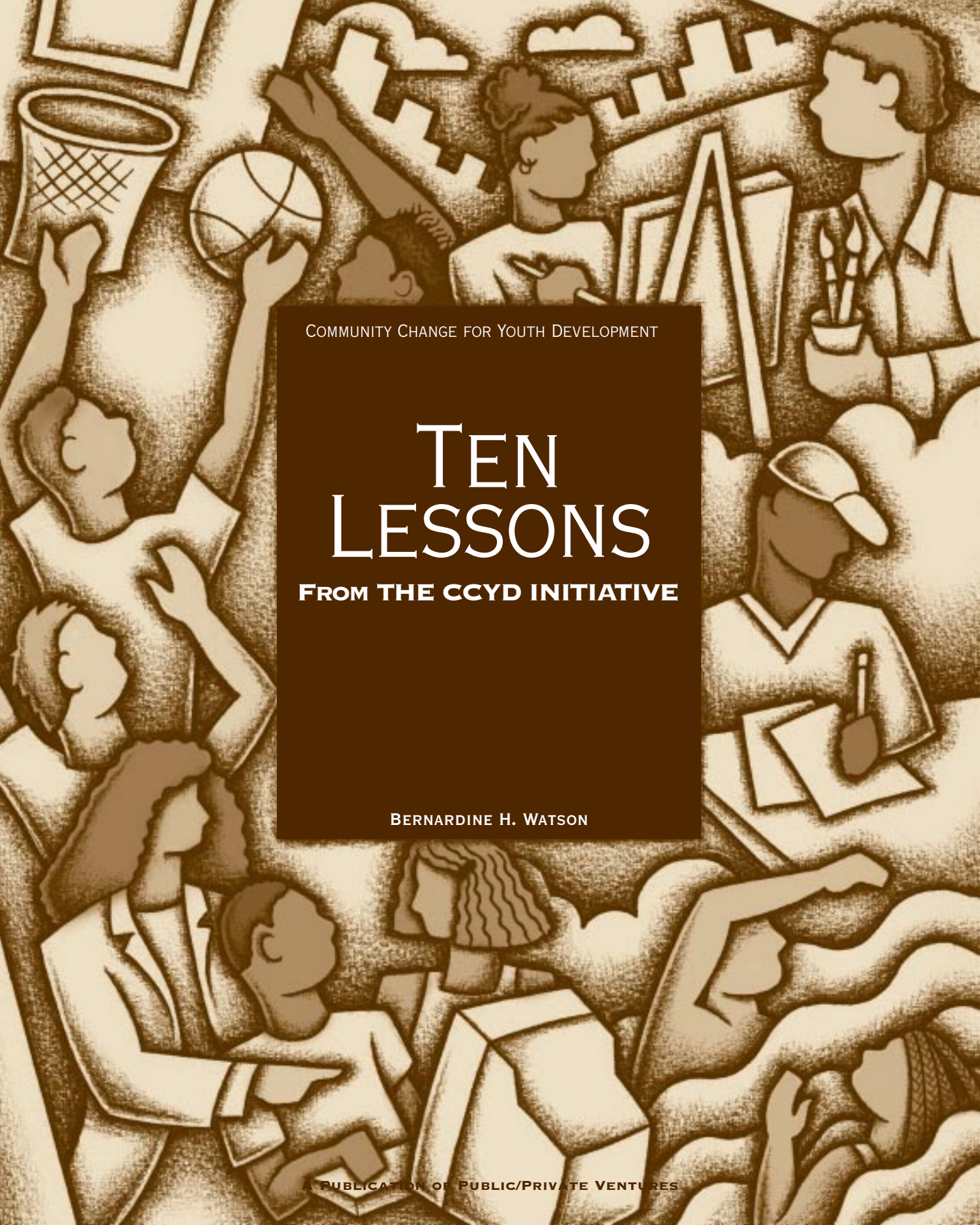


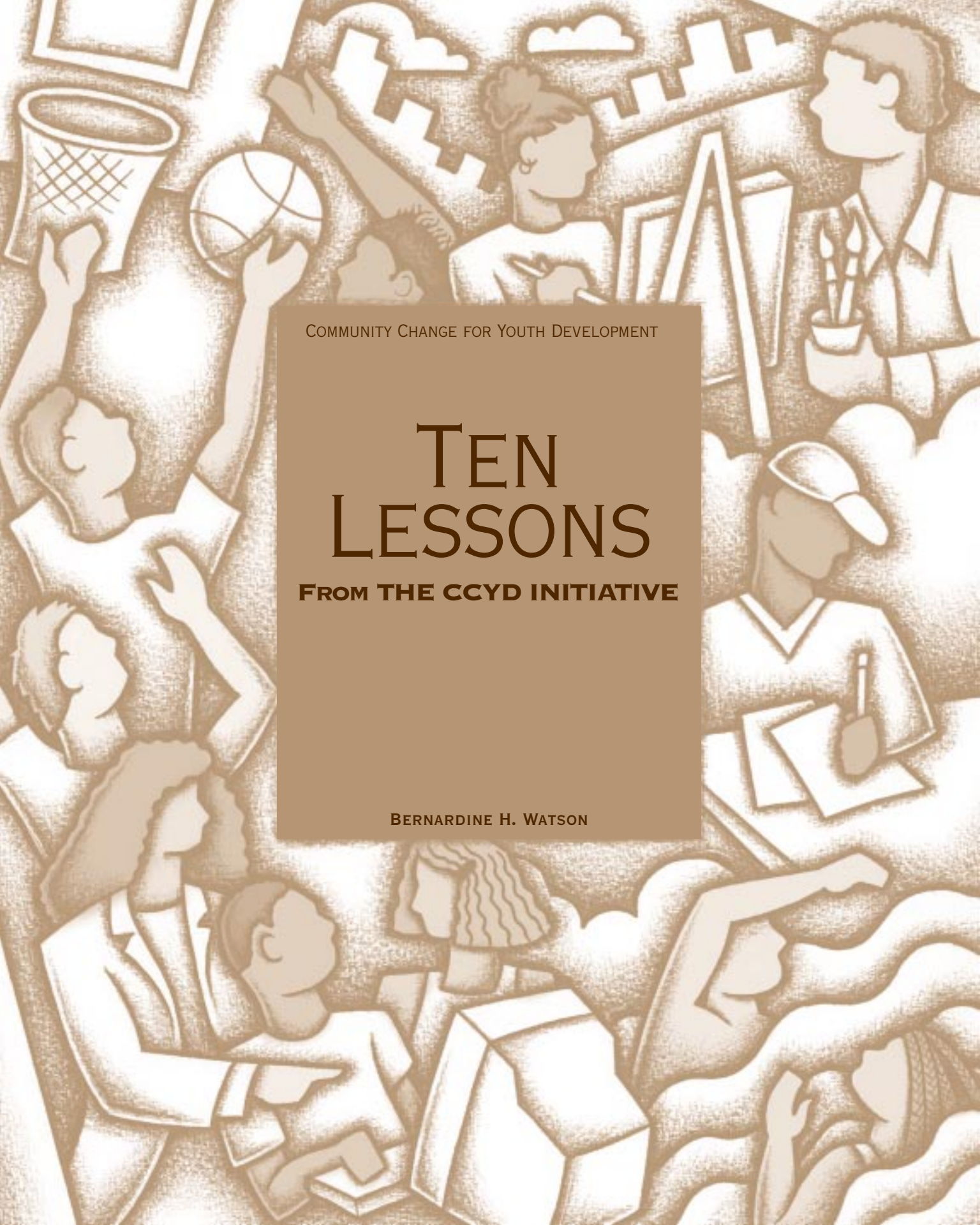
Community Change for Youth Development

Ten Lessons

From THE CCYD INITIATIVE

Bernardine H. Watson

A Publication of Public/Private Ventures



COMMUNITY CHANGE FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

TEN LESSONS

FROM THE CCYD INITIATIVE

BERNARDINE H. WATSON

P/PV

Public/Private Ventures is a national nonprofit organization that seeks to improve the effectiveness of social policies and programs. P/PV designs, tests and studies initiatives that increase supports, skills and opportunities of residents of low-income communities; works with policymakers to see that the lessons and evidence produced are reflected in policy; and provides training, technical assistance and learning opportunities to practitioners based on documented effective practices.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Public/Private Ventures' (P/PV) development of the Community Change for Youth Development (CCYD) initiative began in the early 1990s. Our goal was to design an approach that (1) moved beyond the isolated, short-term, deficiency-oriented programs that had dominated the youth field for several decades; (2) would generate momentum and interest among funders, policymakers and community leaders; and (3) could be sustained beyond the demonstration phase, based on the attractiveness of its activities and the involvement of local institutions and ordinary concerned residents.

CCYD offered participating communities a framework for promoting youth development: a set of research-based "core concepts," and a strategy for implementing them. The core concepts comprise adult support and guidance, positive activities during nonschool hours, opportunities to combine work and learning, opportunities for community involvement and leadership, and support during times of transition. Decisions about the content of the concepts and their implementation priorities were left to the communities themselves—a strategy for sustaining local change once the initiative formally ended.

Teenage youth between the ages of 12 and 20 were the focus of the CCYD initiative. We selected this age group because it had not been the subject of significant public policy attention, and also because it is during the teen years that youth begin developing their own interests and talents, and often seek supports and experiences outside their immediate families. Thus, teens seemed the appropriate target for a community-based initiative.

In 1995, with the support of a consortium of funders, we began planning CCYD projects with several communities and selected those showing the most potential for testing the approach. From 1996 to 2001, P/PV worked with six communities to implement the initiative: Austin, Texas; Kansas City, Missouri; Lower East Side, New York City; Savannah, Georgia; St. Petersburg, Florida; and Staten Island, New York.[1]

This report examines and shares what we learned during six years of work with these communities to implement CCYD's approach to building and sustaining a community-wide infrastructure for positive youth development. The lessons presented here are drawn primarily from the experiences of three of the communities—Austin, St. Petersburg and Savannah—where we concentrated our research and technical assistance efforts; although, where useful, we have also drawn on the experiences of the Kansas City, Lower East Side and Staten Island sites. It is our hope that these lessons will provide insight and information for policymakers, funders, and community-based organizations and leaders seeking ways to revitalize communities and support the positive development of young people.

The next section of the report provides additional background on CCYD, including greater detail on the rationale behind its design. Section III describes the sites participating in the initiative. In Section IV, the lessons of the past six years of CCYD operations are explored in detail; and Section V, the conclusion, discusses the implications of these lessons for youth development and community-building programs.

BACKGROUND

By the early 1990s, professionals in the youth field—both practitioners and policymakers—were beginning to come to grips with the fact that the dominant program strategy of the prior three decades—namely, highly targeted, special programs of limited duration—were, for the most part, not having lasting effects for the youth who participated and were not lasting beyond their specialized funding. Impact evaluations of several major youth initiatives had discouraging results, indicating that most of these efforts provided no counterweight for the increasingly negative environments in which many youth were growing up.[2] Policymakers seemed to have little sense about what to do to help disadvantaged youth, and there was little political support for new, large, publicly funded youth initiatives. Obviously, a new approach with broad appeal was needed.

Advocates and practitioners looking for new approaches were beginning to champion two new and related approaches: "positive youth development" and "place-based programming." According to Karen Pittman, a pioneer thinker in the youth development field, positive youth development emphasizes developing youth's skills and assets rather than focusing on their deficits and problems; and providing positive supports and opportunities for *all* youth rather than a specific group (like teen mothers, dropouts, juvenile delinquents, etc.).[3] Placed-based programming emphasizes locating these supports and opportunities for youth within their own communities and strengthening the capacity of local infrastructures to deliver them. However, how to *implement* these approaches, particularly on any scale, was largely unexplored.

At the same time, research was beginning to shed important light on the core needs of adolescents. In the late 1980s, the Carnegie Corporation's Council on Adolescent Development began to publish research findings that emphasized adolescents' needs for a continuity of supports throughout their teen years, including guidance and support from adults, and positive activities, particularly during nonschool hours. P/PV's own mentoring research had provided information about the characteristics that made for productive adult-youth relationships, including those that take place in programmatic settings. Lessons from our experiences in developing and implementing youth employment and youth service programs in the 1980s and early 1990s had shown that it is important for youth to have quality and consistent exposure to the labor market, as well as opportunities for decision-making and leadership. We hypothesized that if these supports and opportunities could be *increased* for youth in their communities, the number of youth who grow to be healthy, productive adults would also increase.

THE CCYD FRAMEWORK: FIVE CORE CONCEPTS

CCYD's five "core concepts" offer a framework within which communities can increase the number of positive activities available to young people, and organize, prioritize and guide their attempts to support healthy youth development. The concepts are based both on human development theory and research data about the key needs of youth living in poor neighborhoods, and on discussions and interviews with youth. The core concepts reflect the facts that youth development needs are not narrow, that a "one-element" program is insufficient, *and* that a community-based, youth development approach must be *possible to implement in a reasonable period of time* if it is to generate substantial interest among policymakers, funders, community residents and local leaders. These concepts respond to the following basic needs of youth during their crucial developmental years:

- ***Adult Support and Guidance***—support from a range of adults in their neighborhood who interact with them on a regular basis;

- ***Gap Activities***—constructive activities during non-school hours, such as after school, on weekends and during the summer;

- ***Work as a Developmental Tool (or "work/learning")***—a wide variety of work experiences that promote learning, progressive skill development and career exploration;

- ***Youth Involvement in Decision-Making***—involvement in decisions that affect them and opportunities to positively interact with peers in making such decisions; and

- ***Support through Transitions***—increased support as teens move through critical transitions, such as from middle school to high school, and from school to work or further education.

In laying out these concepts, we were aware that they do not represent a comprehensive conceptual framework or theory of adolescent development and do not cover all youth's needs or those of the neighborhoods in which they live. However, these five concepts represented our best assessment of the "basic common nutrients" that all youth need and that we believed were feasible in many neighborhoods without requiring the complete restructuring of schools or other institutions, significant family intervention, or the total transformation of a neighborhood—none of which has proven easy to accomplish in any one location, much less on any scale.

The five concepts are meant to provide substantial direction to neighborhoods about what could be done to support young people. They do not, however, prescribe exactly how these supports should be provided, thus allowing for the preferences, needs, resources and creativity of a particular neighborhood. No particular programmatic approach or institution would be necessary to implement them. Our overall aim was to provide a starting point that would help localities make hard choices and set clear priorities about how to expend resources in ways that generate enough healthy productive activities to counterbalance the destructive opportunities available to young people in their communities. We believed that the involvement of local institutions and citizens from inside and outside the target neighborhoods was necessary to implement and sustain CCYD core concept activities, and that residents from the target neighborhoods had particularly important roles to play in this regard.

Likewise, CCYD was designed to rely heavily on locally generated funding. P/PV's financial assistance was modest; each site received $10,000 for initiative planning and up to $175,000 annually during implementation to leverage local resources for CCYD activities and fund the salary of a local, dedicated project coordinator. The goal was to involve other institutions in financing the implementation of the core concepts—again, for the purpose of sustaining and expanding the effort.

Research and Technical Assistance Strategies

In conducting the CCYD research, P/PV attempted to answer two major issues: (1) What does it take for a community to mobilize its resources to create vital, quality supports and opportunities for youth; and (2) What opportunities and activities are developed, and do community youth take advantage of them? To answer these questions, we collected information from the sites through regular site visits and telephone calls, community mapping, and reviews of site census data and other resource materials. Local site staff also collected and submitted to P/PV data on community youth's participation in CCYD activities. At the beginning of the initiative, we also conducted a youth survey in three of the sites where the most intensive research would be carried out. The purpose of the survey was to give us a better understanding of the youth in these communities and the level of supports and opportunities that were already available to them.[4]

Our technical assistance strategy reflected lessons from other demonstrations that we have operated, our observations of other projects in the youth and community-building fields, and our sense of how to make the best use of limited resources. First, our field experience indicated that in order to be most useful to sites, substantive technical assistance needed to be *practical*,

and deal with the "nitty-gritty" implementation issues that operators face every day. While P/PV could provide some of this assistance, we believed that "cross-site" peer interaction should play a significant role.

Second, we learned through our other demonstration work that helping sites to develop benchmarks, goals and outcomes, and providing them with regular feedback on their progress, are among the most useful roles an outside intermediary can play. Given these lessons, our technical assistance priorities were:

1. **Monthly visits by P/PV staff.** During the initial planning period, these visits were used to help the sites make decisions and move quickly to implementation.

   Monthly visits during the implementation phase led to *quarterly review sessions* held at the sites with P/PV staff and all key constituencies in the project site. These quarterly sessions were planned to help keep communities focused on their operational strategies and benchmarks, to provide objective outside feedback about implementation progress, and to promote internal discussion that could lead to necessary modifications in implementation strategy;

2. **Targeted assistance** on specific issues, as requested by the sites; and

3. **Annual cross-site conferences**, where peer learning and exchange among participating communities could take place.

The intent of this technical assistance approach was to be supportive of the local communities participating in the initiative *without* overly prescribing local action.

THE SITES

In selecting sites for CCYD, we sought communities and target neighborhoods that needed the kind of infrastructure development and strengthening that CCYD was designed to support. At the same time, because of our heavy reliance on local resources, we needed sites with *some* existing capacity. A key capacity we looked for was local leadership in two forms: first, a strong lead agency with legitimacy inside and outside the target neighborhood, experience working on youth issues, and institutional resources to help support CCYD; and second, resident leadership that could help organize neighborhood-level resources for participation in the change process. We looked for sites that could identify target neighborhoods with poverty rates between 20 and 40 percent—places that had obvious needs but were not devastatingly poor. A review of the literature indicated that once the poverty rate in a neighborhood reaches 40 percent, there is significant erosion of the physical and social infrastructure, and an initiative like CCYD would have little chance to take hold and be effective within the timeframe during which we estimated we could sustain national support for and interest in CCYD.[5] We wanted neighborhoods with some youth infrastructure (recreation centers, Boys & Girls Clubs, churches, etc.) to complement the CCYD effort. Since the aim of CCYD was to test the feasibility of increasing supports and opportunities for *all* youth in a target neighborhood within the timeframe of the demonstration, a defined area with manageable but still significant numbers (approximately 1,000 to 2,000) of target-aged youth was considered necessary.

We did not use a Request for Proposal process to select the CCYD sites: first, the administrative load of handling all the responses would have been onerous; and second, our experience told us that a primarily "paper" site-selection process would not necessarily have yielded the best sites. Therefore, we relied on our knowledge of the field, recommendations from funders and other experts, and extensive site visits to help us identify a group of planning sites. Originally, we selected eight sites based on the above criteria and our judgment of the sites' capacities to conduct a productive planning process and implement the CCYD framework. Each site participated in a planning process for implementing CCYD in the target neighborhood and developed strategies for governing CCYD, operationalizing core concepts, involving youth and neighborhood residents, and funding local activities. We then made decisions about the readiness of these sites to proceed to implementation and the level of financial and technical support each site would be afforded. Sites were measured for their ability to (1) develop and commit resources to implement their plan; (2) ensure neighborhood residents' involvement in the planning and implementation of CCYD; (3) organize an effective local governance strategy; (4) understand and develop strategies to implement CCYD's core concepts; and (5) use outside information and expertise to improve local practices.

Using these criteria, between the end of 1995 and 1997, we selected six target neighborhoods and their lead agency partners in which to test the implementation of the CCYD approach. The neighborhoods and lead agencies were:

- South Central East Austin, in Austin, Texas, with the Austin-Travis County Department of Health and Human Services;
- Area C in Savannah, Georgia, with the Chatham County-Savannah Youth Futures Authority;
- Childs Park in St. Petersburg, Florida, with the Pinellas County Juvenile Welfare Board;
- The Stapleton and Clifton neighborhoods in Staten Island, New York, with You Participate in Solutions;
- The Blue Hills and 49/63 neighborhoods, and the Linwood YMCA area in Kansas City, Missouri, with the YMCA of Greater Kansas City; and
- The Lower East Side in New York City, with the Grand Street Settlement House.

The sites and their lead agencies are described in the Appendix.

LESSONS FROM THE CCYD INITIATIVE

Six years of CCYD implementation generated lessons that, we believe, have important implications for the youth development and community-building fields. The lessons concern the overall feasibility of implementing CCYD in the six sites; the role of the core concept framework, the lead agencies and resident involvement in the implementation process; and the experiences of the sites in implementing CCYD.

—Lesson 1—

IT IS POSSIBLE TO IMPLEMENT AND SUSTAIN A NEIGHBORHOOD-WIDE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE, BASED ON A COMMON SUBSTANTIVE FRAMEWORK, IN RESOURCE-POOR NEIGHBORHOODS.

The question of whether CCYD would be "doable" was a critical one. As mentioned in the introduction of this report, the CCYD framework was designed around a substantive strategy—the five core concepts—and supported by the principles of operational flexibility and feasibility, and widespread involvement by a variety of local actors and institutions. It was also meant to test the limits of community-wide youth development programming. How far could a community-wide youth programming initiative move away from the one-element programs of the past and toward comprehensiveness? How many programmatic elements could a community-wide youth initiative support and still be doable? Could the CCYD framework provide a discipline that might be useful to implementing and sustaining more complex efforts? Could the experiences of the six CCYD sites generate a concrete set of implementation lessons that might apply to a variety of localities seeking to support a community-wide youth development infrastructure?

The experiences of the CCYD sites over the past six years led us to conclude that poor neighborhoods indeed *can* make significant progress in both implementing and sustaining a CCYD effort. At the same time, what we saw the CCYD sites accomplish was far from comprehensive. The evidence for this conclusion lies in six areas:

1. *Over the course of the initiative, the sites were able to implement activities in all five core concept areas. However, sites were not able to implement all five core concepts at one time and some were more difficult to implement than others.*

All the sites began their local projects focusing on the concepts that were easiest for them to implement—those that built on existing community strengths, resources and relationships. This meant that, at the onset of the initiative, much of the sites' activities centered on three of the core concepts: gap activities, youth involvement in decision-making, and adult support and guidance.

The neighborhoods and their lead agencies used relationships with community groups, churches, recreation centers, voluntary youth-serving organizations and other public- and private-sector organizations to develop a wide variety of gap activities for youth. These activities ranged from after-school and weekend sports teams, cultural activities, summer camps, and tutoring. To implement the youth involvement concept, teen councils were organized in each site and gave hundreds of youth the opportunity to be involved in CCYD activities, including community service, although sites did have difficulty developing strategies that gave a large number of youth decision-making opportunities. Generally, adult support and guidance for participating youth were included in all planned CCYD activities by increasing the number of paid staff directly involved with youth; by encouraging parents and other neighborhood adults to become involved in program activities; and, to a lesser extent, through formal mentoring strategies.

Most sites had more difficulty implementing the two other core concepts—work as a developmental tool and supporting youth through difficult transitions—where they had the least amount of experience and local support. However, as the initiative progressed, sites were able to develop some activities in these areas. All sites took advantage of the local summer youth employment programs to expand the number

of summer jobs available to target area youth. In addition, sites generated new career exploration and work experience opportunities; worked to develop and improve relationships with local Workforce Development Boards; started entrepreneurial efforts; and strengthened their job placement capacities. Over time, they also developed "transitions" activities, including "summer transition camps" to help youth move smoothly between school levels; support for youth leaving high school, such as SAT tutoring and college tours; and "rites of passage" programs.

2. A significant number of youth were drawn to CCYD activities.

It has long been known that many youth programs, especially those designed for poor youth have difficulty filling program slots. In each of the three CCYD sites where we concentrated our research and collected youth participation data, between approximately 400 and 1,200 youth participated in CCYD activities during 2000 (data for 1999 showed similar numbers). Table 1 shows the number of youth participants in 2000 by site. According to the data collected for these sites, youth came from both inside and outside the target neighborhoods to participate in CCYD. Table 2 shows the number and percentage of target-age youth (12 to 20) served by CCYD in 2000 that lived inside the neighborhoods. Close to one-third of target-age youth in each of the target neighborhoods participated.

3. CCYD was implemented in six very different locations.

In several respects, the CCYD sites are quite similar: all are relatively poor and predominantly minority. However, they represent different regions of the country, and different ethnic groups and cultures. The Lower East Side and Staten Island sites, located in a large northeastern city, are culturally diverse with considerable Latino and African-American populations. Savannah and St. Petersburg are small to medium-sized southern cities, where the population in the target neighborhoods is close to 100 percent African American. Kansas City is a relatively large mid-western city, where the target neighborhoods are again primarily African American. Austin is a large western city where the population in the target neighborhood is overwhelmingly Latino.

The lead agencies that participated also have different institutional profiles and capacities, which include two old-line, traditional, youth-serving agencies; an independent taxing authority that contracts for services to children, youth and families; a city department of community services; a community-based youth authority; and a small agency with a dual focus on youth development and conflict resolution.

This kind of variety indicates the adaptability of the CCYD approach to a variety of local circumstances. In each of the communities, regardless of their size,

TABLE 1
TOTAL YOUTH PARTICIPANTS SERVED BY CCYD IN 2000, BY TARGET/NON-TARGET AREA

SITE	AUSTIN	SAVANNAH	ST.PETERSBURG	TOTAL
TARGET AREA	248	432	425	1,105
NON-TARGET AREA	130	540	38	708
NO ADDRESS	54	293	178	525
TOTAL	432	1,265	641	2,338

TABLE 2
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF TARGET-AGE YOUTH SERVED BY CCYD IN 2000

SITE	AUSTIN	SAVANNAH	ST. PETERSBURG
NUMBER OF TARGET-AGE YOUTH IN NEIGHBORHOOD	800	1,120	1,250
TARGET-AGE YOUTH SERVED	220	333	343
PERCENTAGE	28%	30%	27%

location or predominant ethnic group and culture, residents and community agencies were able to adapt the core concepts in ways that allowed them to expand developmental opportunities for youth, and attract significant numbers of youth to participate.

4. *In each site, volunteers were involved in helping to guide the initiative.*

The CCYD design defined a central role for residents of the target neighborhoods in planning and implementing the initiative. We believed that the involvement of residents would provide an important resource to local efforts *and* increase the likelihood of sustaining the neighborhood changes that occurred during CCYD once the formal initiative ended.

Residents played key roles throughout CCYD. In each of the sites, neighborhood councils, predominately made up of adult residents, were formed to help guide, and in some cases govern the local efforts. Adult residents also participated in CCYD core concept activities by attending large community events, such as community fairs and sports events, and by developing, organizing, coaching and operating core concept activities. In each site, youth volunteers served on youth councils and helped to organize such activities as dances and "back-to-school" events for neighborhood youth. These youth councils also sent representatives to the CCYD neighborhood councils.

5. *CCYD attracted considerable support and resources from local institutions.*

Given the reliance of the CCYD approach on local resources, the initiative could not have been a viable community-based strategy without the support of local institutions. The lead agencies in each site not only contributed their own resources to the initiative, but also led by example in encouraging other local institutions to do the same. For instance, all the lead agencies provided in-kind administrative services, including the time of agency staff, budgeting and payroll services, support for contracting with other organizations for the delivery of activities, and, in some cases, a home for the CCYD coordinator and other project staff. Agencies also provided varying amounts of financial support to the sites. For example, the agencies in Austin and Savannah invested their own financial resources in CCYD and brokered additional public-sector contributions. In St. Petersburg, all financial contributions to CCYD came from the lead agency's own budget. Between 1996 and 2000, P/PV's site grant averaged 19 percent of the local initiative budget in Austin, 30 percent in Savannah and 37 in St. Petersburg. Table 3 shows total P/PV and local support in each of the three research sites between 1996 and 2000.

TABLE 3
TOTAL P/PV AND LOCAL SUPPORT FOR CCYD, 1996-2000

SITE	AUSTIN		SAVANNAH		ST. PETERSBURG	
	$	%	$	%	$	%
LOCAL*	2,938,000	81	1,580,000	70	1,136,000	63
P/PV	675,000	19	675,000	30	675,000	37
TOTAL	3,613,000	100	2,255,000	100	1,811,000	100

*ALL LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS CONSIST OF SIGNIFICANT IN-KIND SERVICES FROM THE LEAD AGENCIES, INCLUDING STAFFING, ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SPACE AND SUPPLIES.

6. CCYD shows clear evidence of durability, beyond the formal demonstration.

By the end of the formal demonstration, in all of the sites, CCYD had influenced the delivery of youth services beyond the immediate project, and was being continued in some form.

- In St. Petersburg, the CCYD governance board, the Childs Park Youth Initiative Council, (CPYIC) became a 501(c)3 organization and continues to operate CCYD with $175,000 in annual support from the Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB). In addition, the JWB replicated CCYD in Largo, another city in Pinellas County. Members of the CPYIC worked with the Largo community to develop a strategic plan, organize residents and create by-laws for their neighborhood council.

- In Austin, the CCYD target neighborhood became a site for the national expansion of Community Impact, a Washington, D.C.-based program that trains youth to be community leaders. Austin was selected as a Community Impact site in part because of its CCYD participation. The former CCYD coordinator is leading the local effort.

- On the Lower East Side, the Grand Street Settlement continues to use the CCYD core concepts to develop and deliver youth development activities.

- In Kansas City, the use of the CCYD framework has been widely spread. During the initiative, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation supported the expansion of CCYD from one YMCA to four. Recently, the Board of Directors of the Greater Kansas City YMCA appropriated $350,000 annually for three years to support the implementation of CCYD in 14 YMCAs throughout the Greater Kansas City area. The Kauffman Foundation recently gave the YMCA a $40,000 grant to train youth development workers in the CCYD approach.

- In Savannah, the Youth Futures Authority (YFA) used the CCYD framework in their strategic plan. All YFA programming for adolescents will be based on the CCYD core concepts.

- On Staten Island, largely because of its participation in CCYD, You Participate in Solutions (YPIS) expanded its funding base and increased its youth budget from $200,000 to $1.5 million in three

years. YPIS recently changed its name to the New York Center for Interpersonal Development and is now taking a lead role to promote youth development efforts in local schools and community organizations, with special emphases on activities that include work as a developmental tool, and adult support and guidance.

The durability of the CCYD approach is attributable to two of its structural elements. First, is the way in which CCYD entered the target areas, focusing on two critical entry points—a strong, committed, credible lead agency *and* residents from the target neighborhood. This local partnership provided the initiative with an institutional anchor, which included experienced leadership as well as administrative and financial support and guidance, plus grassroots "buy-in" and, more important, participation.

Second, both lead agencies and residents saw the CCYD framework as meeting essential needs. For lead agencies, the "fit" between the CCYD framework and their organizations' agendas was key to their commitment in the initiative. The JWB in St. Petersburg was looking for ways to build more capacity in the neighborhoods where they funded programs. Jim Mills, the Executive Director, stated, "CCYD has provided a very effective learning lab for us to test a direction we were already moving in, this initiative just helped us get there faster." Otis Johnson, former Executive Director of the Youth Futures Authority in Savannah, put it this way: "We already had an approach for providing supports to children years 0 to 12. CCYD gave us a framework for developing and organizing supports for adolescents." Residents saw the CCYD framework as a strategy for bringing to their neighborhoods the kinds of activities and supports every parent wants for their children. As the head of one lead agency commented, "When I would go to community meetings and explain CCYD as more adult support, more constructive recreation, and more work and leadership opportunities for their kids, all the parents in the room would nod their heads."

Thus, the CCYD framework is not a novel idea so much as a practical and useful way to implement a direction in which local agencies and resident leaders had already decided to move but had not yet shaped and articulated into a concrete approach. At the same time, local sites encountered numerous challenges in implementing CCYD—primarily fully addressing some of the core concepts, ensuring program quality, and attracting older and higher-risk youth. These challenges and others will be explored in the lessons that follow.

—Lesson 2—

A set of research-based core concepts is extremely useful in helping communities generate consensus around what to do, move quickly to action and stay on track.

The CCYD core concepts did not dictate to communities exactly what should happen on the ground. At the same time, they did not leave communities entirely to their own devices. In providing the core concepts, P/PV attempted to strike a middle ground: to give participating communities a substantive approach, but not a *detailed blueprint* for building a positive youth development infrastructure. Further, the core concepts are not a complete list of all youth's needs, but were designed to address a limited number of issues that both research and experience indicate are critical to healthy youth development. In planning CCYD, we observed that a number of community-based initiatives that aimed at "comprehensiveness" had difficulty getting things accomplished on the ground.

The experiences of the CCYD sites indicate that a set of concepts with the above characteristics can be an invaluable tool for community initiatives. This experience seems particularly relevant now, a time when there is a trend in the youth field toward community-based programming that emphasizes community involvement.[6]

Across the sites, the CCYD framework demonstrated its usefulness in the following ways:

1. Building community-level support and momentum.

The five core concepts' usefulness in this area was evident early in the initiative. The lead agencies used the concepts to generate excitement for participation in CCYD at the neighborhood level. All the lead agency directors commented that the concepts' simplicity and clarity made the initiative easy to explain. During the planning phase, lead agency staff built on the initial enthusiasm generated by the core concepts to bring together a committed group of adult and youth residents and, in some sites, representatives from local institutions to generate, prioritize and create consensus around ideas that related to the core concept areas; and to develop a plan that reflected neighborhood needs and desires. The process of using the core concepts to set priorities and maintain local control over implementation enabled the sites to build initial program delivery around existing community strengths and resources. This strategy allowed sites to get activities off the ground quickly, thus generating and sustaining early momentum.

Again, using the core concepts as a communication tool, the lead agencies and neighborhood residents were able to look for and establish common ground with neighborhood-based agencies that had youth-serving agendas and could implement the activities they had chosen. Both the Savannah and Staten Island sites awarded "mini-grants" and "enhancement awards" to small organizations in the target neighborhoods to implement youth activities. This strategy not only helped to strengthen the local youth program delivery infrastructure but also to spread the word about the initiative. In St. Petersburg, existing neighborhood-level sports teams and a church-run tutorial program were linked and expanded to create the Youth Sports Academy, an activity that created a feeling of ownership in CCYD among neighborhood grassroots organizations.

2. Staying on track.

Using the concepts as a guide, the sites were able to quickly develop plans and move into the first year of program implementation. Again, it is not that implementation was problem free, but by focusing on the core concepts formulation of the basic things everyone wanted for young people, agency staff and neighborhood residents were able to move into implementation and continue *planning by doing*, tackling problems as they went along, and thereby maintaining enthusiasm and momentum. As the initiative developed over the years, the sites continued to rely on the core concepts to help engage and re-engage (adult and youth) residents and service delivery providers, and to keep everyone focused on the priorities the communities set for youth.

Working with a set of research-based, practical and understandable core concepts seems an approach suited to communities looking for practical approaches to tough problems. The concepts provide guidance while at the same time allowing communities to retain local control; they are a mechanism for developing consensus and moving to action—two critical issues for communities aiming to move beyond "one-shot" programs and serve a large number of youth. The fact that the concepts are not designed to address all the problems communities face does not appear to be a problem. As we will explore further, it was difficult for the CCYD communities to tackle all five concepts simultaneously, much less achieve comprehensiveness. In fact, the ability of the communities to make choices about local priorities and critical needs seemed essential to their accomplishing anything at all. Given all these issues, CCYD seems a sensible, practical approach that could fit the local needs and desires of numerous communities.

3. Attracting outside resources.

The core concepts not only helped to generate support and momentum inside the target neighborhoods but also, in some cases, attracted significant outside resources to help support neighborhood plans. Jim Mills, of the Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB) in St. Petersburg, says that the Childs Park neighborhood's ability to articulate a "concrete common-sense change strategy" that prioritized the use of scarce resources was the major reason that the neighborhood was able to attract substantial attention and support from the local city government. This support meant major upgrading at the Childs Park Recreation Center, an increased presence by law enforcement, movement on planning for a long-awaited swimming pool, and a voice for residents in the staffing and management of the center. All this meant that the neighborhood was able to reclaim the center as a safe place for youth activity.

On Staten Island, the Sisters of Charity Health System (SOC), the largest health employer on the island, has had a long relationship with You Participate in Solutions (YPIS), the CCYD lead agency. The SOC's senior vice president sits on the YPIS Board of Directors. Impressed with the CCYD core concept approach and its calls for quick implementation and local input, this SOC official participated in the CCYD neighborhood planning process with the Stapleton and Clifton target neighborhoods, and facilitated participation in the project by the Health System, local YMCA and Police Athletic League.

Toward the end of the first year of implementation, the city of Austin used the five core concepts to frame a successful application for a major State Juvenile Justice (Title V) grant, which provided $100,000 a year for four years to expand youth development activities in the target neighborhood. And, finally, pleased with how the CCYD project was going in Blue Hills, the first target neighborhood in Kansas City, the Kauffman Foundation invested heavily in an effort by the Greater Kansas City YMCA to expand the effort to other YMCAs. The fact that the core concepts are based on youth development research, as well as common sense and experience, made them even more attractive to these larger, outside organizations, which, in many instances, were becoming increasingly intrigued with the youth development approach.

—Lesson 3—

It takes local leadership with credibility, resources and commitment to partner with residents, get results within a reasonable period of time and sustain a youth development effort.

A strong, capable lead agency is an essential component of a community-change effort. This may seem obvious, but our review of other community-change efforts indicated that many such initiatives rely on collaboration, the thoroughness of the planning phase or large amounts of funding as surrogates for a strong lead agency. Our experience shows that none of these approaches are as predictably reliable as a strong lead agency. To quote the late Mitchell Svirdoff, who in the 1960s funded one of the country's first community-building efforts, the Gray Areas Project, when he was at The Ford Foundation, "no capital—social, economic or political—lasts long without strong local institutions and leadership to guide how it's invested."[7] It is exactly for this reason that P/PV's site selection criteria put so much emphasis on the capacity and role of the lead agency.

The preceding section focused on the utility of a framework in the CCYD initiative. However, it was the lead agencies in the sites that helped to anchor and shape the local effort. Their participation in the CCYD initiative showed that if the goal is to implement a youth development effort that is more than a program, residents and partners from the broader community must be involved in a meaningful way. To achieve results quickly, you need lead agencies that are not just strong but that have broad credibility, resources and institutional commitment.

1. Credibility.

The local agencies selected to lead CCYD are well-known and well-regarded institutions, with sound reputations in their communities and, in some cases, nationwide. The credibility of these agencies has been particularly important in encouraging neighborhoods' buy-in, and in supporting the role of the resident-driven neighborhood councils, developing partnerships for program delivery and attracting outside resources to the target neighborhoods.

As a taxing authority that raises public dollars for youth programming in Pinellas County, the JWB is a powerful local presence. The JWB's partnership with the Childs Park neighborhood helped to focus the city's attention on the neighborhood's needs. The JWB played an active role in building a strong relationship between the neighborhood council, the Childs Park Youth Initiative Council (CPYIC), and the city. It often arranged and attended meetings between city representatives and CPYIC members to discuss the city's investment in the Childs Park Recreation Center, the center of youth activity in the neighborhood. These discussions played a major role in the city's completion of center renovations.

Austin's Health and Human Services Department (HHSD) used its position as a city department not only to help link the East Austin target neighborhood and its youth to public programs and other city resources but to also help initiate partnerships between the neighborhood and other organizations. For example, the Austin HHSD brokered a new relationship between the target neighborhood and 4-H, which resulted in summer camp opportunities for youth; and helped support a relationship between the initiative and the public schools, which generated work-learning, tutoring and other after-school enrichment activities. In Kansas City, the Kauffman Foundation was most certainly responding to the Greater Kansas City YMCA's reputation as a credible, respected place-based institution when it invested so heavily in the expansion of CCYD through the YMCAs.

The lead agencies also used their credibility *inside* the target neighborhoods to convince residents and neighborhood-based organizations to participate in CCYD. Almost all the sites reported some initial hesitancy on the part of target-area residents and community-based agencies. This hesitancy was not due to any disbelief in the value and utility of the core concept framework but to suspicion of yet another initiative designed by "outsiders" (P/PV) coming into their communities. Like other low-income areas around the country, these neighborhoods had been through a number of revitalization efforts in which they had little voice and from which they felt they had not benefited. Residents were skeptical that they would have the kind of involvement in governance and decision-making that the initiative design claimed, and that the initiative would indeed be long term. In a few sites, neighborhood grassroots organizations thought that CCYD would be "just another program" that would compete with them for youth and funding. Lead agencies had to use their relationships inside the target neighborhoods to "sell" CCYD and convince constituencies that they would share in decision-making as well as in any new resources.

In Austin, Dennis Campa, then head of Austin's Community Services Division in the Health and Human Services Department, used his credibility with the predominantly Latino East Austin neighborhood to convince residents and other community-based leaders that CCYD would benefit the neighborhood. For Staten Island, gaining the acceptance and participation of the grassroots organizations in the target neighborhood was a big challenge. The lead agency, You Participate in Solutions (YPIS), used its well-established reputation as a skilled and fair mediation agency to facilitate these organizations' participation in CCYD. Dominic Brancato, Executive Director of YPIS, recalls that the small community-based organizations in the target communities were initially very suspicious of CCYD. He said, "Once it became clear that YPIS would use CCYD to empower community organizations and not compete with them, things got better, but initially it was very hairy."

2. Resources and commitment.

In choosing agencies to lead the local CCYD efforts, P/PV deliberately selected organizations that appeared to have the capacity to take on a complex community-change project and provide a range of supports. In addition to recognizing the importance of the financial, administrative and human resources the lead agencies provided to CCYD, discussed earlier, we also learned that implementing CCYD required an extraordinary *commitment* from the lead agencies. Some agency heads admitted that local CCYD projects have been a big challenge and, at times, a strain for their organizations. They report that the task of helping to develop the neighborhood councils, particularly those focused on governance, was time consuming and difficult. This was true even for those agencies like Savannah's Youth Futures Authority (YFA), which have experience in working with community-based boards. Gaye Smith, former Deputy Director of YFA, said that the organization talked for years about changing the top-down nature of their decision-making in working with the Area C community, and admits that the CCYD experience taught them a lot about neighborhood-based engagement and planning. However, she also said, "I did not always feel equipped for the shift in role from director to technical assistance provider, mentor and capacity builder."

Other agency leaders commented on how time consuming it had been to manage a complicated initiative like CCYD: the time they and their staff spent negotiating with and helping to provide guidance to the neighborhood resident groups; helping to obtain service delivery contracts; trying to find the right staff and staffing combinations to implement the activities; and providing overall management services and support. Dominick Brancato, of YPIS on Staten Island, the smallest of the CCYD lead agencies, admitted that in an organization like his, overseeing CCYD could take a significant portion of institutional resources. He said, "The effort required for CCYD sometimes diverted staff attention from some of the strategic thinking needed for the overall organization."

We have also seen how change in leadership at the top of a committed lead agency can affect the momentum of a community initiative even when leadership is shared with the target neighborhood. Both the lead agencies in Savannah and Austin experienced this kind of leadership change at different times during the initiative. In both cases, the attention, and to some degree the commitment, of the lead agency were diverted to internal issues, which slowed the momentum of the local effort.

The CCYD experience indicates that in order for a lead agency in a neighborhood-wide youth development initiative to support a neighborhood's vision for its youth, it must have the qualities outlined above. It also shows that, given the tremendous investment involved in leading such an effort, agency leaders must feel that an idea generated from the outside supports their own agenda. Finally, the partnerships forged between lead agencies and target area residents to accomplish initiative goals show that institutional involvement and grassroots participation do not have to be in conflict—as they have been in many community initiatives over the years and that, in fact, both are necessary for successful implementation.

This experience also shows the potential limitation of the CCYD approach—or any approach that aims to go beyond building individual programs. Many of the poorest neighborhoods do not have strong organizations and yet are the neighborhoods whose youth most need a multiple component approach like CCYD. Our experience in the CCYD communities indicates that such an approach is unlikely to take hold or be effective until a strong lead organization is developed.

—Lesson 4—

VARIATION AND FLEXIBILITY IN THE ROLES RESIDENTS PLAY, AND A COMMITMENT TO CLARIFYING AND SUPPORTING THOSE ROLES, ARE ESSENTIAL TO INTEGRATING RESIDENTS INTO NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES.

CCYD called for a central role for residents of the target neighborhoods in planning and implementation of the initiative. We believed that the involvement of residents would provide the important human resources necessary for supporting and sustaining the neighborhood's vision of change. As we have seen in some neighborhood-based efforts, such as successful Community Development Corporations and Town Watches, self-interest is the most powerful motivator for neighborhood improvement. The strong involvement of residents creates shared responsibility between them and institutions for the effort and its outcomes. Finally, the involvement of residents in neighborhood initiatives provides legitimacy for the effort, signaling to others that it is worthwhile. In CCYD, we observed two elements essential to productive resident involvement in neighborhood-based, youth development initiatives.

1. Variation in roles and options for participation.

Key to productive resident involvement is providing a variety of ways in which residents can participate. And just as important, the options for participation should fit the needs and culture of the residents *and* the lead agency.

Resident involvement in CCYD began during initial planning. When the local CCYD initiatives began to move from planning to actual implementation, issues of initiative governance and the ongoing roles of residents needed to be worked out.[8] As the more complicated issue of initiative governance was sorted out between lead agencies and residents, sites began to look for other ways in which residents could be involved with CCYD. Roles that seemed to grow naturally out of the planning period were the involvement of residents either as direct participants in activities, as volunteers and paid staff, and as activity organizers and/or implementers. As previously mentioned, a large number of residents attended such community activities as neighborhood celebrations and sporting events. Those that had more time volunteered as coaches, tutors and other staff in a wide variety of activities. Several sites hired neighborhood residents to staff activities. In Savannah, an Area C resident founded and operated a summer employment program for area youth.

These opportunities for involvement helped to maintain the momentum of the local initiatives, and to generate feelings of optimism and "community" in the neighborhood.

Neighborhood councils dominated by residents were also a fundamental element of resident involvement. Initially, P/PV promoted a governing and decision-making role for these councils, since this seemed a way to ensure that residents would have a major voice in the future of the initiative in their neighborhoods. However, we found that options for the role, structure and character of the councils were critical. Both governance and advisory councils evolved across the sites. Kansas City and the Lower East Side formed advisory councils designed to have limited decision-making authority, but significant "input" into the initiative and be a source of volunteers for activities.

The type of council that developed in each site depended on the culture and goals of the lead agency, and its relationship with the target neighborhood. In Austin, Savannah, St. Petersburg and Staten Island, where governance councils were formed, lead agencies saw this strategy as a useful tool for furthering their organizational goals and of more effectively engaging the neighborhoods in which they worked. Some residents in these sites were already involved in neighborhood organizations and interested in taking on more responsibility.

In the Lower East Side and Kansas City, the lead agencies wanted to enhance their relationships with the communities they served, but felt that resident governance was not a good fit with their institutions. The Settlement Houses on the Lower East Side have a long history of service provision to the neighborhoods that surround their facilities. But at the start of CCYD, they had little experience with resident involvement in program operations. The Settlements' board members felt strongly that fundamental responsibility for any activity taking place under the Houses' auspices belonged with the board and could not be turned over to any outside entity. Therefore, an advisory council, Communities in Action for the Lower East Side (CIALES), was formed with adult and youth representatives from each of the three neighborhoods that make up the CCYD target area. This council participates in the development of the annual CCYD plan, provides volunteer support and raises money for CCYD activities.

In Kansas City, there were two issues that made resident governance a difficult fit. First, the YMCA had some of the same reservations about resident governance as the Lower East Side Settlements. According to Gail Vessels, former Vice President of Programming for the Greater Kansas City YMCA, "The YMCA is part of a large national organization that has standard rules for the way affiliates operate. It is counter to the Y's mode of operating to give up control to the community—mainly because of liability issues." Also, residents of the three target neighborhoods in Kansas City did not jump at the idea of governance. According to the current vice president of programming, residents see the YMCA as a place that provides programming for their children, not a place where residents participate in decision-making. Eventually, each of the three target neighborhoods developed a Neighborhood Youth Development Council (NYDC) to provide input into program planning and implementation, with members that volunteer in a variety of CCYD activities. The YMCA is also in the process of forming an umbrella council made up of representatives from the school district, city government, religious institutions and the three CCYD neighborhoods. This group will assist the YMCA in the overall governance of the initiative.

2. Clarity and support for residents' roles.

Regardless of the type of resident involvement, the CCYD experience indicates that clarity of roles and responsibilities, and support for residents' participation is critical for their productive engagement. For example, the Greater Kansas City YMCA was used to working with volunteers within YMCA institutions. However, the CCYD approach encouraged and relied on volunteers who developed and worked on programs in the neighborhood—outside of the YMCA. YMCA policies dictate that volunteers must go through a screening process in order to be cleared to work with youth, and must operate according to certain policies and procedures, such as complying with child labor laws. According to Cynthia Phillips, former YMCA Vice President for Community Development, CCYD raised questions about whether resident volunteers working and operating programs in the community should go through a screening and training process. The issue was a dilemma for the YMCA, since it did not want to discourage neighborhood involvement. As a result, it developed a new rule for working with CCYD volunteers: if a CCYD activity is held at the YMCA and staffed by YMCA personnel, then YMCA policies and procedures apply. If the activity is in the community and is being implemented by a community organization, the YMCA develops agreements with these groups outlining their responsibilities for the youth.

Role clarity and support are particularly important for the thorniest type of resident involvement—governance councils. History shows that there is a great deal of room for confusion, miscommunication and struggles for power between resident groups and institutions when it comes to the issue of governance in community initiatives.[9] In CCYD, these councils were most productive when their roles and responsibilities were clearly spelled out and the lead agencies support their capacity development.

The St. Petersburg and Staten Island sites are good examples. Both thought it critically important to establish clear ground rules for the relationship with the newly formed governance councils: early in the initiative, they developed written agreements. In St. Petersburg, the agreement between the Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB) and the neighborhood council, the Childs Park Youth Initiative Council (CPYIC), gave the governance council responsibility for developing the CCYD plan, identifying program providers to carry out the plan, deciding how initiative funds would be spent and monitoring the plan's implementation. The agreement also named CPYIC as a full partner with the JWB in contracting with providers, determining eligibility for contract renewal, hiring project staff and participating in their annual evaluation. And, the JWB agreed to provide matching funding, housing for the project coordinator and other types of administrative support, such as processing budget reports and contracts. Jim Mills, Executive Director of the JWB, is quick to add that while any staff hired had to have the endorsement of the CPYIC, the JWB reserved the right to fire staff, since "we can be sued." In 1999, the agreement was updated to include a commitment from the JWB stating that it would not fund other agencies to provide youth services in Childs Park without the approval of the CPYIC. That same year, the CPYIC was named as a third party in an agreement between its organization, the JWB and the City of St. Petersburg, which spelled out the responsibilities of the city's recreation and police departments to the Childs Park neighborhood. This agreement gave the neighborhood a voice in the staffing and operation of the recreation center. Jim Mills credits this agreement as the reason that "JWB and Childs Park residents did not spend much time haggling."

In Staten Island, the YPIS Board of Directors was not initially enthusiastic about turning the governance of any YPIS program over to another entity. As far as the board was concerned, it was ultimately responsible for all programming. In order to allow for neighborhood-based governance of CCYD, a decision-making structure was developed so that the YPIS and CCYD boards overlapped. This created a partnership and facilitated communication between the two entities. The CCYD board makes decisions about program implementation and the use of project funds, and the YPIS board approves all decisions. According to Executive Director, Dominic Brancato, there is rarely a problem.

Another major issue in integrating residents into community initiatives is developing their capacity, so they can be useful in whatever role they play. In CCYD, residents volunteering in activities needed training in youth development principles. Members of neighborhood councils needed to learn how to plan and run meetings; governance council members, in particular, needed to learn to develop strategic plans, read budgets, develop by-laws and monitor programs. Sites that provided these supports, either themselves or by arranging technical assistance with P/PV or other consultants, tended to have a more stable and productive experience involving residents.

Involving residents in neighborhood initiatives is a difficult and time-consuming process. For residents to be useful resources in a neighborhood-based initiative, there must be flexibility and variety in involvement strategies so that neighborhoods can decide on the approach that works best for them. There must be clear and realistic agreements among residents and institutions about roles and responsibilities. And, lead agencies must be committed to stay the course and support the development of residents' capacities. Still, even when all these elements are present, issues of resident burnout, turnover and capacity can be factors. We observed in some CCYD sites that significantly involving residents took a lot of energy and resources, and sometimes slowed the process of program implementation. The fact that so many of the sites embraced and worked to implement various forms of resident involvement reiterates the importance of having the CCYD approach fit their agenda. According to Jim Mills of the JWB, "There is sometimes a conflict between community change and youth development. For JWB, it has been worth it to slow down sometimes

and let residents learn along the way. Without real resident control of the initiative, you might get youth development, but you would not have community change."

—Lesson 5—

LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND PREVIOUS PROGRAMMING EXPERIENCE PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN A COMMUNITY'S ABILITY TO ADDRESS SERIOUS YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHEN DEVELOPING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE APPROACHES.

The aim of CCYD was to test the feasibility of increasing the number and quality of supports and opportunities for adolescents in the target neighborhoods. We found that the strengths and capacities of communities' youth development infrastructures determined which supports and opportunities they could provide relatively easily and which were more difficult.

The CCYD communities had relatively little difficulty implementing and attracting youth to *gap activities*, and activities that provided *adult support and guidance.* These were core concepts for which the sites had existing infrastructure. There were existing programs and activities on which to build and expand, and experience, knowledge and relationships on which to draw. In addition, residents understood these concepts intuitively, based on their own growing-up experiences and what they wanted for their children.

However, *work as a developmental tool (WADT)* and *supporting youth through critical transitions* were more challenging concepts for the sites to implement. The aim of WADT was to have sites develop a series of opportunities for youth that deliberately integrated work and learning, either in school, during enrichment activities or on the job. These opportunities were to be age-appropriate and progressive in skill development. The aim of the *transitions* core concept was to have sites develop activities that responded to the many major physical, social and institutional (e.g., movement between school levels) changes that youth experience during their teen years. According to adolescent development research, youth need specific support from the adults and institutions in their lives during these times of transition in order to successfully navigate these changes and to use them as periods of growth.

While both concepts made sense to agency staff and parents, most sites did not have the experience, existing relationships or resources to develop concrete implementation strategies.

1. Work as a Developmental Tool.

The CCYD communities were greatly interested in the WADT core concept. Providing work experience and jobs for neighborhood youth was a significant need. According to the youth survey P/PV conducted at the onset of the initiative, a substantial number of youth in all three research sites—38 percent in Austin, 49 percent in St. Petersburg and 59 percent in Savannah—had never held a job for pay. However, five of the six lead agencies had no experience implementing the kind of wide-ranging, work-learning strategy called for in CCYD. The one exception was the Lower East Side. Its Settlement Houses—Grand Street, Henry Street and University—had spent decades developing relationships and resources in both the public sector, including schools, and the private sector to create and fund a progressive work-learning system for the teens in their target area.

The other sites were, for the most part, starting from scratch. Generally, the lead agencies had little experience dealing with the public sector employment and training system. While sites worked to build this relationship, they found the system difficult to access. Timing was one critical factor. Just as the sites were attempting to develop innovative work-learning strategies, they were caught in the system's transition in the late 1990s from the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The sites had to deal with the general confusion in the public employment and training system. And further, the new WIA regulations brought a shift away

from the traditional Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), the most accessible source of youth employment public dollars that had been available.

Neither was the private sector a fruitful avenue for developing work experience and job opportunities for target area youth. Like most youth development organizations in this country, the lead agencies did not have strong ties with the private sector. In addition, most of the target neighborhoods have few businesses that might offer productive employment on any scale, particularly for older youth. Speaking of the target neighborhood in St. Petersburg, Jim Mills stated, "Childs Park is virtually a residential neighborhood without many businesses that might offer employment for youth—mainly hair salons and fast food. The neighborhood has been economically segregated for years."

Finally, the schools did not turn out to be a productive partner for implementing WADT activities for three major reasons. First, most of the lead agencies have little experience working with the schools and negotiating the school bureaucracy. Second, beyond elementary school, youth in the target areas, like most youth in urban communities, do not attend school in their neighborhood, making it that much more difficult for agencies and schools to work together on a neighborhood-based effort. Third, the schools in the CCYD sites reflect the status quo around the country in that they do not focus on preparing youth for work.

P/PV provided significant technical assistance to help sites develop work-learning activities and to implement the WADT core concept. However, because of the lack of local infrastructure, sites were limited in the work-learning opportunities they could provide. In the first few years of CCYD, prior to the full implementation of WIA, sites worked to increase SYEP slots for neighborhood youth. They also implemented career exploration and work experience activities for youth 12 to 15 years old, which could be provided by summer camps or by a few small private employers with whom the lead agencies or neighborhood council members had existing relationships.

For older youth, sites developed activities such as GED preparation, job search and work-readiness skill building; and, for college-bound youth, college field trips and SAT test preparation. However, with limited connections in the private sector and local Workforce Development Boards, sites placed little emphasis on developing part-time, after-school or weekend jobs for in-school youth, or full-time employment for out-of-school youth. Some sites experimented with small entrepreneurial ventures, including jewelry making, lawn mowing, and concession stands at athletic and other events. One agency official called these ventures "efforts to end run the system."

2. Supporting youth through critical transitions.

The transitions between school levels during adolescence—middle to high, and high school to further education and/or work—are major markers of the teen years, and correlate directly with other physical, psychological and social changes that youth experience. However, P/PV's survey of the three research communities had shown that a significant number of youth in the sites had not received support when transitioning between schools or exploring post-secondary school opportunities; and most sites had great difficulty developing and implementing programming designed to support youth through these critical times. Recognizing and intentionally supporting the critical junctures in youth's development was not a practice among the CCYD project staff nor has it been in the youth development field in general. As with the WADT core concept, one of the biggest obstacles to implementation on any scale was the limited relationship between the lead agencies and the schools.

Two sites made progress in implementing this core concept: the Lower East Side, again, because of the Settlements' experience and programming capacity; and Austin, where, through community organizing, target area residents were able to involve the schools. Over the years, the Settlements have developed a deliberate strategy of providing continuous, progressive supports to neighborhood youth as they grew and

their needs changed. Youth are deliberately channeled from one program to another depending on their needs and developmental stage. These program practices were expanded through CCYD. Interestingly, because of the Settlements' internal program capacity, they delivered much of this programming without the direct participation of the schools.

The Austin site, however, worked with Austin Interfaith, an affiliate of a national community-organizing group, to pressure the local school system to be more responsive to the community. With this political clout, and motivated by their deep concern about the high percentage of school dropouts in their neighborhood, the CCYD neighborhood council worked with the Austin Independent School District to develop a transitions initiative designed to help youth move from the neighborhood elementary schools to the larger, more impersonal junior high and high schools they would be attending on the other side of town.

As the initiative progressed, and with support and encouragement from P/PV's technical assistance, other sites developed and implemented transitions activities, such as "rites of passage" programs to help young men and women prepare for the responsibilities of young adulthood; tutoring to prepare youth for the next grade level; and college tours for high school juniors and seniors. Most involved only a small number of youth and avoided the public schools.

Clearly, weaknesses in the youth development infrastructure in the majority of the CCYD sites affected their capacity to address issues of work-learning and transitional support for youth—issues that are critical to healthy, positive youth development. There are two reasons why this should concern the youth field, particularly since there is growing interest in initiatives that serve youth in a community context. First, the CCYD sites represent a range of poor communities in terms of size, geography and ethnic make-up. This indicates that the experiences of these sites with work and transitional support are not unusual, and are likely typical of communities across the country. Second, the agencies selected to lead CCYD in the local sites are among the most capable in the country. The fact that their leadership and commitment, *along* with P/PV's technical assistance, could not resolve local infrastructure issues indicates their severity.

Through CCYD, we learned that when implementing community-wide youth initiatives in poor neighborhoods, there will be programming areas where local autonomy is unlikely to produce creativity or effectiveness. Significant national expertise, including packaged models and specific implementation instructions, is required.

—Lesson 6—

Older youth and higher-risk youth are more difficult to attract to positive youth development initiatives and require targeted outreach.

Across the initiative, sites had difficulty attracting older and higher-risk youth to participate in CCYD activities. Attitudes toward early intervention, the youth development field's "non-targeted" programming approach, and the strengths and weaknesses of the local infrastructure in the CCYD sites, all played a role.

1. Older youth.

Data collected for the year 2000 in the three CCYD research sites show that the majority of youth participants for whom we have age data were between the ages of 14 and 15. The smallest numbers of participants were between the ages of 18 and 20. (Table 4 shows the percentage of youth participants by age group.) One underlying reason for the lack of participation among older youth was the strong belief in a number of the CCYD communities that it is generally better to "start young" when providing supports for youth—a belief that the CCYD sites hold in common with much of the country. For example, in Savannah, a site with a long tradition of serving younger children, approximately 18 percent of participants for whom we have data were below the target age range.

TABLE 4
PERCENTAGE OF CCYD PARTICIPANTS BY AGE GROUP

AGE	>12	12-13	14-15	16-17	18-20
PERCENTAGE	16%	20%	33%	21%	10%

A related reason that so few youth over the age of 16 participated in CCYD is the type of activities on which the sites focused. We have discussed the fact that many of the activities generated by the sites were in three core concept areas—gap programming, adult support and guidance, and youth involvement, all areas where the sites could build on existing community resources—with significantly less work-learning and transitions programming.

The experiences of many youth development organizations (such as Boys & Girls Clubs and YMCAs) indicates that after the age of 15, most teenagers lose interest in organized gap activities. And, while the support of adults can be welcomed by older teens, it often needs to be more "instrumental"—that is, focused on helping teens learn specific skills or providing them with useful information for making important decisions, choices and plans for the future. Unfortunately, sites did not have the resources and experiences necessary to develop solid strategies in the areas where older teens need and are looking for the most help—work-learning activities that help them earn money, develop skills and learn information about careers, future education and training; and activities that support their transition to adulthood. Thus, the sites' programming was generally not attractive to older teens.

2. Higher-risk youth.

Discussing the participation of higher-risk youth in CCYD is a bit trickier, since we did not collect data on the risk level of youth who did participate. However, our experience in the sites indicates that while CCYD youth were not risk free, generally they were in school, living at home with family, and had not had significant involvement with the juvenile justice system.

The lack of participation by more troubled youth appears due to the prevailing philosophy in the youth development field at the time of CCYD's development—a philosophy that all youth need developmental supports, and that programs and activities should be open to *all* youth and not target any particular group. Operating with this philosophy, the sites generally attracted youth who already had supports in their lives (parents, church, sports team, recreation center) that would connect them to positive activities in the neighborhood. Troubled youth with fewer supports did not tend to show up at the youth development activities that CCYD offered.

As the initiative progressed, some sites with special concerns about troubled youth in the target neighborhood began to adjust the CCYD approach and take special steps to serve dropouts and potential dropouts, teen parents and youth from the juvenile justice system. Austin (which, according to the community survey we conducted, had more youth involved in risk behaviors than did any of the other research sites) went furthest in this area by hiring youth and caseworkers to engage high-risk youth and their families in CCYD activities and connect them to other social supports.

It is critical for youth development initiatives to develop strategies for attracting older and high-risk youth if they are to be effective in helping communities deal with their most pressing concerns and get the outcomes that many funders require. As previously mentioned, for older youth this will require the field to develop new approaches for helping teens attach to the labor market—approaches that can help shore up

the broken infrastructure in poor areas without having to wait for the total reform of the public schools or the revitalization of whole communities.

Attracting high-risk youth will require outreach strategies designed specifically to identify youth in trouble, as well as programming to support them. Youth development organizations like Boys & Girls Clubs of America have realized this and are taking steps in this direction. For example, some clubs across the country have designed special strategies to identify and recruit youth at risk of gang involvement and those already in gangs, to include these youth in their regular youth development programming and to provide additional supports to address their needs.[10]

—Lesson 7—

IT IS CRITICAL TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN YOUTH INVOLVEMENT AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES *AND* TO PROVIDE ADULTS WITH THE TRAINING THEY NEED TO HELP YOUTH BECOME GOOD DECISION-MAKERS.

The purpose of the youth involvement core concept is to provide youth with opportunities to take on leadership roles in the communities, learn decision-making skills and help shape their own activities. While youth involvement activities have always had a place in youth programming in this country, they have received new attention with the growth of the youth development approach and the focus on youth's assets instead of their deficits. The theory behind youth involvement is that when youth play an active role in school, work and the community, they are able to make better decisions about their lives, are more likely to have a greater sense of responsibility for their community, perform better in school, and have higher self-esteem and lower levels of risk behavior. Two issues surfaced in the implementation of this core concept.

In most cases, the youth involvement activities that were implemented did not provide a large number of youth with opportunities for involvement and decision-making, but provided leadership opportunities for only a few youth. For example, the "youth councils" in each site developed and implemented activities attended by hundreds of youth. However, only a small number of youth with the time, skills or desire to take on leadership roles usually rose to the top.

These youth leaders were the ones who made decisions about council activities, joined in the neighborhood council and participated in "premier" activities, such as speaking on behalf of the initiative and their neighborhood at the City Council or attending CCYD conferences in other cities. The same was true for most other youth involvement strategies developed by the sites. Usually, a handful of youth in each site had the opportunity to take on leadership roles in activities, such as team captain or to work with younger children.

At the same time, while the youth involvement activities implemented by the sites often turned out to be *youth leadership* opportunities for a few youth, tensions often arose between youth and adults when even those few youth attempted to take on leadership and decision-making roles. Adults often expressed frustration when youth did not carry out their leadership responsibilities in a consistently mature way. Youth complained that adults did not respect their views and interfered when they attempted to make decisions.

Attention to these two issues is important if adolescents in youth development efforts are to become productively involved in their communities on any scale. The CCYD experience indicates that there is a tendency to use the terms "youth involvement" and "youth leadership" interchangeably. Since they are *not* always interchangeable, this lack of clarity can cause initiatives to fail in achieving their goals. In pursuing youth involvement strategies, the sites focused almost exclusively on activities that required the development of youth representatives. There were few strategies that provided youth with opportunities to learn decision-making skills as part of their involvement in school, church, on the job and in their everyday lives. These types of strategies almost guarantee that only a few youth will be able to participate. While there is

value in developing individual youth leaders, these strategies alone do not appear to be practical for neighborhood-wide initiatives seeking to involve a large number of youth. As in the adult world, not all youth are cut out to be "representatives" or externally focused leaders. Further, how many leaders or representatives can an organization or activity have? In neighborhood-based initiatives, youth should be encouraged to participate in a wide variety of organizations and activities in their communities—civic and volunteer organizations, school and church groups, recreational activities, and work opportunities. At the same time, these organizations need to be encouraged to provide opportunities for all youth to practice decision-making within the context of their participation.

In addition, adults in these initiatives—staff and resident volunteers—require training and support in order to help teens make the most of decision-making and leadership development opportunities. This may be particularly true in poor and/or minority communities where residents may not be exposed to this youth development principle, and where adults may have legitimate fears that youth's development and exhibition of "leadership" skills could place them in conflict with authority.

—Lesson 8—

LARGE-SCALE INITIATIVES NEED A STRUCTURED APPROACH TO ASSESSING PROGRAM QUALITY ON AN ONGOING BASIS.

The aim of CCYD was not just to increase the number of activities for youth in the target neighborhoods, but also to provide youth with *quality* activities. As the CCYD sites developed and implemented more core concept activities, the issue of program quality became increasingly important.

Youth agencies' capacities to ensure the quality of their programming is a growing concern for the field as a whole; until recently, youth organizations tended to take the quality of programming for granted. This issue is even more complicated for neighborhood-wide initiatives in which a wide variety of service delivery organizations with different capacities, staff and approaches are involved. The involvement—as staff and decision-makers—of residents who may have no experience with youth programming adds yet another layer of complexity. Who should determine program quality standards in these initiatives: The lead agency? Contracted service deliverers? Neighborhood councils? Who is responsible for monitoring program quality and deciding when an agency or activity does not meet quality standards: Lead agency staff? Resident volunteers?

Over time, and with P/PV technical assistance, the CCYD sites began attempting to deal with this issue. They tried to more carefully screen service deliverers and furnish potential providers with youth development training. In one site, neighborhood council members intermittently visited programs to monitor for quality. In other sites, lead agency staff were assigned this responsibility. Across the sites, however, none of these strategies was implemented with enough planning, time and consistency to be as effective as necessary.

Our experience indicates that communities need low-cost, non-bureaucratic strategies for determining program quality in their youth development initiatives so they can identify areas that need improvement. These strategies should be developed prior to the start of implementation, with clear definitions of quality standards and assignments of responsibility for monitoring activity. Based on the CCYD experience, P/PV research staff developed a set of observational tools designed to measure the developmental quality of a wide variety of youth program activities. These tools have been used in P/PV's evaluations of other community-based initiatives and after-school programs, and are being refined for broader use across the youth development field. We have found that in these complex initiatives, ensuring program quality can be the critical link between implementation and positive outcomes.

—Lesson 9—

PLACED-BASED INITIATIVES CANNOT DRAW A FENCE AROUND A NEIGHBORHOOD.

Like most place-based initiatives, CCYD was designed as a neighborhood saturation strategy. We selected target areas with specific neighborhood boundaries—either geographical or as perceived by most neighborhood residents. An element of the initiative design was to attempt to saturate these defined areas with youth development activities and affect as many youth residents as possible. But we found it impossible to draw a fence around a neighborhood.

Across the CCYD research sites, close to one-third of the participating youth came from outside the target neighborhoods. (Table 5 shows the percentage of youth per site for whom we have contact data that came from outside the target neighborhoods.) In the Austin and Savannah sites, the proportion was approximately 30 and 40 percent, respectively. A map of Savannah and contact information collected on youth participants indicated that the majority of non-target area residents come from neighborhoods adjacent to Area C. These youth participated in activities at the lead agency's Family Resource Center and in CCYD-sponsored summer and after-school activities at Area C recreation centers. In Austin, staff and residents of the target neighborhood told us that teens often cross neighborhood boundaries to visit, and sometimes stay with friends, schoolmates and relatives, and will participate in activities if they are appealing and available.

The philosophy of the site's lead agency and/or the neighborhood residents also played a key role in the number of non-target area youth who participated in CCYD. The Youth Futures Authority in Savannah sees its mission as serving youth primarily in Area C but also in the broader community. Residents in the Austin site expressed a great deal of concern, not just for the youth in East Austin but for all Latino youth that need the supports offered by CCYD. In contrast, in St. Petersburg, only a handful of youth participants did not live in the target area. This was because of the lead agency's decision to focus on the Childs Park area in order to test the CCYD approach in a single neighborhood before applying the lessons of the initiative to other neighborhoods.

The fact that some CCYD sites served a significant number of youth from outside their target area indicates an important lesson for geographically based initiatives, particularly in poor neighborhoods. It appears that when new, quality activities are offered, they will draw youth from surrounding areas, particularly if youth have few alternatives. Also, as youth go into their teen years and attend schools outside their neighborhoods, their friendships and movement patterns broaden, as does their concept of the world. These are developments that should not be discouraged. Finally, agencies and program staff like those in Austin and Savannah, who see their youth-serving agendas as primary (and more important than strict adherence to a demonstration project research design), may be reluctant to turn non-resident youth away. Neighborhood-based youth development efforts should be flexible enough to deal with these issues when they arise.

TABLE 5
TOTAL YOUTH PARTICIPANTS SERVED IN 2000
FROM OUTSIDE THE TARGET AREA

SITE	AUSTIN	SAVANNAH	ST. PETERSBURG	TOTAL
TOTAL NUMBER SERVED	432	1,265	641	2,338
% OUTSIDE TARGET AREA	30%	43%	6%	30%

—Lesson 10—

RESEARCHING COMMUNITY INITIATIVES MAY REQUIRE NEW STRATEGIES, INCLUDING CLOSER ENGAGEMENT AND TIMELY, ONGOING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN RESEARCHERS AND SITES.

In her essay, "The Role of the Evaluator in Comprehensive Community Initiatives," Prudence Brown describes the particular demands that comprehensive community initiatives (CCIs) place on evaluators. Because of CCIs' multiple goals and complex interactions, including their "community empowerment" and capacity-building components, Brown writes that in order to be effective, evaluators of these efforts are often called on to take on roles beyond evaluation—roles of "coach, collaborator or capacity builder."[11] Even though CCYD was not a CCI, and therefore had fewer goals than do more comprehensive initiatives, we found that the project researchers had to play the new and varied roles that Brown describes—roles that required constant and open communication with the sites.

As CCYD implementation progressed, P/PV realized that the traditional way of researching initiatives—keeping a distinct distance between the research and the initiative's activities—would not work, for two related reasons. First, institutions and residents in the participating sites demanded timely and regular feedback from the research we were conducting, and did not want to wait for the formal reports we had planned to release according to our own timetable; afterall, a major selling point of CCYD had been community involvement in all aspects of the initiative. Second, it became clear that the sites needed feedback from the research to help them develop and manage their implementation strategies. Attempting to implement CCYD "community-wide" meant lots of partnerships and moving parts. The sites needed reasonably quick feedback from the "outsider eye" of the research to help them understand what was actually happening in the various components of their local project.

This realization caused us to change our research approach to allow more engagement between the researchers and the sites. We began to send researchers along with field operations staff to the quarterly review sessions so that sites could hear firsthand about data collection issues and any early findings and observations. The researchers also began collaborating with field staff to provide the sites with detailed written feedback on implementation issues after each quarterly review. Finally, research staff began providing technical assistance where appropriate, such as working with site staff on issues of data collection and using data to assess program quality. In essence, the researchers took on the roles of "coach" and capacity builder alongside field operations and technical assistance staff.

We found this change in research strategy to have two important effects. First, sites *were* able to use information from the research to assist project implementation. For example, youth survey data collected across the three research sites showed that target youth in the Austin site had relatively higher rates of participation in a variety of risk behaviors. After a detailed discussion of these data with the research staff, the Austin site decided to develop strategies for engaging high-risk youth in CCYD activities.

Second, our willingness to be more responsive to the sites' desires and need for more timely research information made a positive difference in our relationship. As described in this report, the onset of CCYD saw a significant amount of suspicion in all the sites, particularly among residents, about participating in a research demonstration with a national organization. "Demystifying" the research helped increase trust and improve communication, and enhanced our ability to get the sites' cooperation in the difficult task of collecting the data needed for the research.

Traditionally, nonprofit agencies have had difficulty collecting accurate and complete data on youth's participation in activities. This difficulty stems mainly from agencies' lack of time and staff to devote to data collection duties. The problem is compounded in

community-wide initiatives like CCYD, where youth move among a variety of partners' activities. Improved communication between the research staff and the sites did not solve all data collection issues. Tables 1, 4 and 5 indicate that missing data was still a problem across the sites. However, making researchers more responsive to the sites allowed us to work closely with their staffs and increased the amount of data we were able to collect.

Our experience indicates that flexibility and openness in working with sites is critical to conducting research in community-wide initiatives. We also learned that getting community input into research and data collection strategies *prior* to start-up can improve the quality of the research and support local implementation.

CONCLUSIONS

The youth field has significantly changed since the early 1990s when P/PV began planning CCYD. The field has shifted its focus from the kinds of programs CCYD was developed to address—short-term, single-focused, highly targeted programs that deal specifically with youth's problems—to wholly embrace the idea of positive youth development. There is also a widely held belief in the youth field today that positive developmental supports and opportunities should be available to adolescents *in and throughout their communities.* In fact, the National Research Council's Committee on Community-Level Programs recently concluded that "adolescents who spend time in communities that are rich in developmental opportunities for them experience less risk and show higher rates of positive development."[12] Furthermore, support for community-level youth development efforts has significantly grown over the past decade. Foundations, which have been pioneers in funding community-wide youth development initiatives, have continued to make large investments in this type of programming. Over the past few years, federal, state and local governments have begun to support after-school programs across communities in an effort to provide large numbers of youth with enrichment and academic activities. Since the CCYD sites have made considerable progress in implementing community-wide initiatives, and with the growing interest in community-wide youth development efforts, we believe the lessons outlined in this paper are particularly relevant. They point to fundamental "on-the-ground" issues that arise as communities attempt to "change" in order to implement this type of programming. We do not claim that the CCYD sites, and therefore their experiences, are representative of all communities. However, as stated in the report, these sites represent communities of various locations, sizes, ethnic groups and cultures; we therefore believe that their experiences are useful to many other communities across the country.

The lessons outlined in this report address two major, interrelated questions in the CCYD research design:

—1—
What does it take for a community to mobilize its resources and create quality supports and opportunities for youth?

Based on our work with six communities, it appears, as we hypothesized, that mobilization on behalf of youth requires a combination of flexible external supports and local capacities.

External Supports

Clearly, one of the most critical external supports that can be brought to bear in a community attempting a change effort is a substantive framework—a set of ideas that is research based, yet understandable and easily communicated; helps local institutions and residents focus their thinking on already established community goals; and provides implementation guidance but is not prescriptive about implementation choices. This kind of framework was invaluable to the CCYD sites in all aspects of the initiative—planning, fundraising, generating citizen support and attracting participants, developing and implementing activities, and sustaining and expanding support for the initiative. While the communities had difficulty implementing some of the concepts in the framework, such as "work-learning" and "supporting youth through transitions," the introduction of these ideas helped stimulate new discussion, partnerships and activities to begin developing these approaches for supporting youth. The fact that the CCYD framework has only five elements and did not attempt to be "comprehensive" appears to have been beneficial. As this report shows, the sites had trouble enough attempting to address those five—any more might well have been overwhelming and kept the sites from making much progress in any area.

Other external supports that are critical to the effective implementation of community-wide youth initiatives include technical assistance and research strategies that are flexible yet balanced in considering local input and realities; access to outside expertise as needed; and timely communication and feedback about implementation progress.

Providing adequate technical and research support for community-youth initiatives is extremely challenging given their complexity, their time-bound nature and usual resource constraints, and the fact that there are few proven technical assistance and research models and approaches on which to build. Regarding technical assistance, we chose an approach that included a variety of elements including top-down and bottom-up strategies, as well as cross-fertilization among the sites. Our experience indicates that this kind of multi-pronged approach can be very valuable. The bottom-up strategies provide for local input, allowing sites—institutions and residents—to make decisions within an overall framework about the kinds of activities they want to pursue and to determine which sequence of activities best meets local conditions. The cross-site learning appears critical to sites' development of practical operational knowledge and problem-solving skills—things site staff often seem more interested in learning from peers tackling the same kinds of issues than from outside technical assistance providers. At the same time, top-down strategies allow for the provision of outside expertise when it is critical to implementation.

What seems extremely important in employing this kind of technical assistance approach is adequately preparing for and balancing the use of the various elements. For example, an important lesson for P/PV came in understanding the full value of top-down strategies when dealing with areas in which communities have little experience, such as "supporting youth through transitions." Pre-packaged materials and activities, and explicit instructions for their use, might help communities make more progress in these areas. Based on the lessons from CCYD, we are using this strategy in other community projects.

Keys to effectively researching these kinds of initiatives appear to be communication (early and often), flexibility, and responsiveness to community needs and concerns. Communities and intermediaries conducting research need to understand each other's needs from the outset of the initiative; and intermediaries bear the particular burden here. This does not mean that intermediaries need to necessarily endanger their research strategies or risk their abilities to measure the effectiveness of the initiative. The ability to be flexible in research strategies, particularly when it comes to providing sites with useful and timely information can determine the level of local support necessary for gathering the data to conduct the research.

Local Capacities

P/PV's decision to work with communities with some existing internal capacity to plan, implement and sustain CCYD was clearly the right one. Across the sites, lead agencies contributed substantial resources and facilitated the participation of other important partners, such as city government, other community-based institutions and residents. While the core concept framework turned out to be a powerful vehicle in these communities, it would have been useless without these kinds of internal capacities.

However, CCYD did not just showcase what can be accomplished in relatively poor communities when external supports can partner with and build on internal capacities. It also revealed areas where internal capacities need to be nurtured and developed and infrastructure needs to be strengthened if developmental opportunities are to be provided for all youth. Resident involvement in community initiatives needs to be developed and nurtured with care. Clearly committed residents have an important role to play in these kinds of efforts. However, significant attention must be paid to developing a number of avenues for residents to be involved; providing training and support for their roles; and finding a productive balance in each community between resident involvement and institutional responsibility.

Our experience also indicates that these communities have limited capacity to monitor youth participation or the quality of programming across community-wide efforts. This lack of capacity can affect a community's ability to know what types of programs are being effective and therefore how youth development dollars should be invested. We support the National

Research Council's call for communities to "put into place locally appropriate mechanisms for monitoring the availability, accessibility and quality of programs for youth in their community."[13] As mentioned in this report, P/PV has developed a set of observational tools for assessing the quality of youth development activities, which we believe can make an important contribution to community-based programming.

Finally, there is the issue of communities that lack the capacity and infrastructure to address major areas of youth development, such as the "transitions" of adolescence and learning about and connecting to the labor market. While, as stated above, a more top-down approach to technical assistance might help strengthen local capacity and infrastructure in these areas, no amount of technical assistance from a single demonstration project with limited time and resources can fix such issues as the weaknesses in and disconnection among the variety of sectors—community organizations, schools, public-sector employment and training, and the private sector—needed to respond to some basic youth development needs. Focused investment in bold new ideas by policymakers and foundations—sometimes acting as partners—is necessary.

Yet, progress is being made. Current investments by foundations and federal, state and local governments in after-school programming are promising. In hundreds of communities across the country, schools and community-based organizations are collaborating on after-school programs that require them to resolve some of the issues that have kept them from productively working together in the past. After-school programs can be an important vehicle for developing and delivering "transitions" supports for youth, particularly younger adolescents. Also, a few major foundations across the country have begun a strategy of heavily investing in the growth and capacity of select youth development organizations so they can take the lead in helping to address various community infrastructure issues.

As indicated by the CCYD experience, one of the most critical infrastructure issues facing communities attempting to address youth development is the lack of institutional leadership when it comes to youth, particularly regarding older adolescents and the labor market. Unfortunately, there does not appear to have been much progress made in this area. We believe there is a definite need for innovation here, including strategies that more directly involve the private sector in providing youth with work-learning opportunities and labor market information.

—2—

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE DEVELOPED AND DO YOUTH TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEM?

In general, the CCYD communities tended to focus, at least initially, on developing those opportunities where they had experience, capacity and resources—namely, gap activities, adult-youth relationships and youth involvement. This strategy makes perfect sense for relatively poor communities for two important reasons. First, it allows activities to get off the ground quickly, thus confirming that *something can actually be done* and therefore generating excitement and momentum. Second, as we also saw in CCYD, this strategy gives communities the opportunity to invest in organizations and increase the quality and quantity of activities they believe already meet community needs. We have discussed at many points throughout this paper that the kinds of activities the sites had difficulty developing fell into those areas where there was little local experience and capacity, and where infrastructure development and new ideas were required.

Clearly, youth took advantage of activities that the CCYD communities were able to develop. Large numbers of youth came from inside and outside the target neighborhoods to participate in the CCYD activities. This speaks to the unmet demand in communities for quality activities. Currently, some community-based initiatives are targeting larger geographic areas and working with entire small to medium-sized cities rather than neighborhoods. They see this strategy as an opportunity to attempt to address issues of local demand for quality supports, increasing the influence of their efforts, particularly with major

funding streams, and reducing any possible tensions within communities about who gets additional outside resources.

It is also clear that the kinds of activities a community is able to develop for youth directly influences the ages and types of youth that participate. The fact that the majority of youth participants in the CCYD sites were below the age of 16, and relatively trouble free, reflects the overall state of youth development programming where, as mentioned above, youth organizations have little capacity to generate activities that attract older and higher-risk youth—namely, activities that link youth with employment and provide support during difficult times, including the transition to adulthood. Again, there is some promising activity under way that is attempting to address these issues. Currently, the issue of older and high-risk youth is making its way onto the agendas of some foundations, research intermediaries and advocacy groups. A goal of all of these groups is to better understand "what works" in improving outcomes for older youth and then develop strategies for influencing policy changes and improving community-level programming.

P/PV is also developing a body of work that flows, in part, from the lessons of CCYD with regard to high-risk youth. Recently, we concluded a study of 21 Boys & Girls Clubs that altered their recruitment strategies, staffing patterns and program offerings to attract high-risk and, in some cases, older youth. Study findings show that by using these strategies, the clubs have been successful in attracting and retaining these youth. We are also testing in 16 poor communities the use of partnerships between local juvenile justice agencies and faith institutions, to provide older, high-risk youth with alternatives to violence, through mentoring, employment and educational supports. We believe that public and philanthropic investment in credible, name-brand institutions like Boys & Girls Clubs and faith organizations may represent a viable way to build the capacity of communities to direct troubled youth to more productive developmental activity. Finally, we are in the process of developing technical assistance materials for the "transitions" and "work as a developmental tool" core concepts for use by community-based organizations attempting to address these issues. We believe, based on experiences with six distinct communities, that the CCYD approach—the framework and strategy for implementation—can be a valuable tool for helping localities mobilize their resources and attract large numbers of youth to positive youth development activities. We also believe that the approach can be extremely useful for helping traditional, community-based, youth—serving institutions like YMCAs and Settlement Houses to better organize, expand and communicate their youth development offerings, and partner with the neighborhoods they serve.

CCYD appears to have influenced the direction of youth development programming in the participating sites, since each site is continuing aspects of the initiative—sometimes in the original target neighborhoods and other times by expanding to other localities. At the same time, the initiative also pointed out the complexities of implementing community-wide change efforts and the fragile nature of local infrastructures to address certain fundamental youth needs even in communities where there is strong and concerned institutional and resident leadership.

ENDNOTES

1. Sites in San Francisco, California; Boston, Massachusetts; and Minneapolis, Minnesota also participated in the planning phase of CCYD, but were not selected for implementation. The Staten Island site did not join the initiative until 1998.

2. P/PV's Summer Training and Education Program (STEP) is one example. In STEP, which operated from 1984 to 1988, localities provided adolescents with a summer program that combined academic remediation, work opportunities and life skills instruction using federal Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) funding. Evaluation results from the initial pilot showed promising improvements in youth's skills. However, a long-term follow-up study showed no overall improvement and, in some instances, showed regression in youth's skills and behaviors.

3. See "A New Vision: Promoting Youth Development." Testimony of Karen J. Pittman before the House Select Committee on Children Youth and Families. September 1991.

4. In 1998, we published the results of this survey in *Support for Youth: A Profile of Three Communities* (Sipe, Ma and Gambone).

5. In his book, *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*, William Julius Wilson defines ghetto poverty neighborhoods as those with poverty rates of at least 40 percent and discusses the physical, social and economic deterioration that these areas face. (Chapter 1). Alfred A. Knoff, Inc. New York, 1996.

6. For example, over the past decade there has been a proliferation of after-school programs. This kind of programming generally emphasizes community involvement. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Trenton-based Children's Futures initiative, and The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Making Connections project are other examples of this growing trend.

7. Unpublished Manuscript, Mitchell Sviridoff. No date.

8. *Resident Involvement in Community Change: The Experiences of Two Initiatives* p.17. Karen E. Walker, Bernardine H. Watson and Linda Z. Jucovy. Public/Private Ventures, Summer 1999.

9. During the 1960's War on Poverty program, power struggles between communities and local governments over program direction and the use of resources were common. These struggles were generally due to a lack of clarity about the roles of residents and community-based organizations in the program.

10. *Targeted Outreach: Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Approach to Gang Prevention and Intervention*. pp.31-40. Amy J.A. Arbreton and Wendy McClanahan. Public/Private Ventures, March 2002.

11. New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives. Volume 1: Concepts, Methods and Contexts. Published by the Aspen Institute on Comprehensive Community Initiatives. 1999. Edited by James P. Connell, Anne C. Kubish, Lisbeth B. Schorr, Carol H. Weiss. "The Role of the Evaluator in Comprehensive Community Initiatives. Prudence Brown." Chapter 7.

12. Community Programs to Promote Youth Development. National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. pp. 10-11. National Academy Press, 2002.

13. Community Programs to Promote Youth Development. National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. p.304. National Academy Press, 2002.

APPENDIX: CCYD LEAD AGENCY AND SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Austin, Texas

Neighborhood: South Central East Austin
Lead Agency: Austin Travis County Department of Health and Human Services

The Austin Travis County Health and Human Services Department (HHSD) works in partnership with communities in Austin and Travis County to promote health, safety and well being. Early in the initiative, Austin Interfaith, a grassroots community mobilization group, served as co-lead agency with HHSD to provide community-organizing support for CCYD. South Central East Austin is predominantly Latino (89%); approximately one-third of the residents live below the poverty line. Certain characteristics of the target neighborhood stand in stark contrast to the rest of the city of Austin. The neighborhood's Latino population is four times the city's, and residents in the neighborhood are more than twice as likely to be poor as residents in the overall city. While the city of Austin has one of the most highly educated populations in the country, among residents in the CCYD target neighborhood who are 18 years and older, 66 percent have less than a high school education and only 5 percent are college graduates. Residency in the neighborhood is stable, with 50 percent of the residents reporting that they have lived in the neighborhood for more than 10 years.

South Central East Austin is known for community activism. It has several neighborhood organizations, churches (24), and schools (three elementary and one middle), many of which are actively involved in community and political issues. There are also 15 indoor and outdoor recreational areas in the neighborhood.

Kansas City, Missouri

Neighborhoods: Blue Hills, 49/63 and the Linwood YMCA Area
Lead Agency: The YMCA of Greater Kansas City

The YMCA of Greater Kansas City has delivered youth services in Kansas City for more than 100 years. The YMCA became the lead agency for the Kansas City CCYD initiative in 1996 after YouthNet, the original lead agency, experienced top-level staffing changes and underwent reorganization. Prior to the implementation of CCYD, the YMCA was already involved in several community initiatives in the Blue Hills neighborhood. One of the YMCA's goals is to use the CCYD framework to expand the youth development approach across Kansas City neighborhoods.

Blue Hills was selected for participation in CCYD in 1996. In October 1997, with funding from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the YMCA expanded CCYD programming to two additional neighborhoods: 49/63 (a neighborhood named after street boundaries) where the Forest Avenue YMCA is located; and the Linwood YMCA area, which consists of several small neighborhoods surrounding the Linwood Y's facility. All three neighborhoods are predominantly African American. Poverty rates are 24.4 percent in Blue Hills, 53 percent in 49/63 and 34 percent in the Linwood area. For the past 10 years, the Blue Hills Neighborhood Association has helped to implement a number of youth development opportunities in that neighborhood. However, schools are the only facilities in the neighborhood that provide space for youth activities. In 49/63 and Linwood, the YMCAs are the major facilities for youth activities.

New York, New York

Neighborhood: The Lower East Side
Lead Agency: Grand Street Settlement House

Grand Street Settlement is a multi-service, multi-generation organization that has been providing comprehensive programs for families on the Lower East Side for almost 100 years. Grand Street specializes in employment and job training programs for youth and adults. For CCYD, Grand Street began collaborating with two other historic Lower East Side Settlements—Henry Street and University Street—to provide community-wide supports for youth in the neighborhoods surrounding the three Houses. In addition to a variety of other programming, Henry Street Settlement specializes in arts and athletic programs, and University Settlement specializes in college preparation.

For more than 150 years, the Lower East Side's successive generations of immigrants have made the Lower East Side their home. Today, the Lower East Side continues to play that role. The target area is culturally diverse: 67 percent of the residents are Latino; 16 percent are African American, many southern born; 7 percent are Asian; and 8 percent are Caucasian. Thirty percent of the area's residents receive public assistance and 36 percent live below the poverty line. Educational attainment is lower than for New York City as a whole, and unemployment is substantially higher. Much of the housing stock is more than a century old.

The Lower East Side is known for its social services. In addition to Grand, University and Henry Street Settlements, there are three additional Settlement Houses in the community as well as a number of other social service organizations; and a high school and junior high school that provide space for youth development activities.

Savannah, Georgia

Neighborhood: Four census tracts in Area C
Lead Agency: The Chatham-Savannah Youth Futures Authority

The Youth Futures Authority (YFA) is a 43-member collaboration of public- and private-sector institutions and private citizens that was formed in 1988 to operate The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Youth Futures project in Savannah. YFA's mission is to ensure that "every child in Chatham County is born and grows up healthy." The CCYD framework allowed them to extend their existing continuum of services for children and families to include adolescents and young adults. "Area C," name in a 1991 city-sponsored crime study, is a subsection of the poorest area of Savannah, and is where YFA has traditionally focused its efforts. Ninety-four percent of the neighborhood is African American; the poverty rate is 35 percent, 12 percent higher than Savannah as a whole. A substantial percentage of residents in the CCYD area (43%) have not completed high school.

There are no public schools in Area C; however, 52 churches are scattered throughout the neighborhood. The area also has eight parks and two community centers, including the YFA operated Family Resource Center.

St. Petersburg, Florida

Neighborhood: Childs Park
Lead Agency: Pinellas County Juvenile Welfare Board

The Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County (JWB) is an independent taxing authority that contracts with a variety of organizations for the delivery of social services to families and children. The JWB was interested in testing CCYD in Childs Park for its potential use in other communities across Pinellas County. The Childs Park community is located in South St. Petersburg and is predominantly African American (73%). Nearly one-quarter of the Childs Park population lives below the poverty line in contrast to a 14 percent poverty rate in the overall city; and fewer adult residents in Childs Park have graduated from high school or attended college than in the city of St. Petersburg as a whole.

The majority of the houses (91.5%) in the target area are single-family homes with resident ownership at 65 percent. There are four public schools in Childs Park, but because of desegregation laws, most Childs Park youth travel across Pinellas County to attend school; therefore, school facilities are rarely used as community resources. The Childs Park Recreation Center, located in the middle of the neighborhood, is the only recreational center with a developed outdoor space and indoor facilities. Childs Park has 25 churches, a few of which provide after-school tutoring.

Staten Island, New York

Neighborhoods: Stapleton and Clifton
Lead Agency: You Participate in Solutions

You Participate in Solutions (YPIS) is a conflict resolution and youth empowerment agency with deep roots in the Staten Island community and long history of successful collaboration with a wide variety of local agencies. Recently, YPIS changed its name to The New York Center for Interpersonal Development.

Stapleton and Clifton are adjacent communities, where residential life is in many ways defined by the presence of two large, low-income housing complexes. The communities are home to a diverse mix of races and cultures: 40 percent African American (including a significant population of African immigrants), 30 percent Caucasian, 25 percent Latino and 5 percent Asian. Twenty-three percent of residents have incomes below the poverty line. Of the families living in the low-income housing complexes, 44 percent receive public assistance. There are two elementary schools and one intermediate school in the Stapleton-Clifton area. The intermediate school houses a Beacon after-school program. Other youth resources include the YMCA, the Police Athletic League and a number of small community-based service providers.

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